

# Letters from California. By Harriet Harper

**LETTERS FROM CALIFORNIA.**

BY

HARRIET HARPER.

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**LETTERS FROM CALIFORNIA. FROM NEW ORLEANS TO LOS ANGELES—A LAND OF MILK AND HONEY—BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS AND MARVELOUS BUSINESS ENERGY.**

LOS ANGELES, CAL., May 14, 1888.

California! I wonder what sort of picture these ten letters form upon your mental retina? Is it of flowers or fruit, of delicious climate, of gold mines, of big potatoes? To me it was one and all of these, a volume of fairy tales quite as charming as Cinderella and the glass slipper, and quite as mythical and elusive.

I don't know how we ever came to formulate our plans for this trip, for of course we had talked it over in an idle, desultory way many and many a time. I think we were both rather inclined to be independent, having reached those years when if discretion has not put in appearance, it is hopeless even to look for it; in fact, we were two women bent upon having a happy, untrammelled tour of six months in California, and we could not be made to see why the accident of sex should keep us from our hearts' desire. We wanted to go; why should we not go? "My dear young women," our prudent Mentors argued "there are restrictions, limits, conventionalities, proprieties—in fact, you are women."

No argument at all!” we bore down upon them ruthlessly; “if women can hold a council they are capable of traveling about their own country.”

Well, it all ended, or rather began, in a Pullman palace car, with tickets for two, on the Sunset route.

As the train crept slowly out of Algiers, Marion and I mutely but impressively clasped hands. We had cut the traditional apron strings; we had snapped our fingers at old saws; we had asserted and maintained a positive individuality. The lunch basket lurched eloquently from the opposite seat; the map of the great Southern Pacific Railroad lay wide open upon our laps; the folded coupons, with Los Angeles as our goal, lay safely within our pockets.

The first day we were too much surprised at ourselves, and too deeply interested in our fellow travelers and a couple of books (which, being warned against as especially naughty, we had made every effort to provide ourselves with) to notice much of the passing scenery. The second day, however, we entered the “Lone Star” State and cut across that immense territory, through flowering fields of cacti, ranging from pale lemon to the deeper, richer hues of the blood orange. We trampled over 5 great patches of blue, and red, and yellow, and velvet browns, seeing acres of verbenas growing wild, of poppies and marigolds, and phlox. It seemed like a veritable flower garden laid out to please the artistic eye, and all day long we reveled in these elysian fields.

The third day bore us to the grandest scenery along the whole route, which is, of course, the cañon of the Rio Grande. We tore headlong past the great limestone cliffs, rising perpendicularly 200 or 300 feet above our heads; we dived recklessly into the very heart of stone; we spun along over the crumbling edge of huge precipices; we fairly flew over a network of tressles; and yet, whichever way we turned or twisted there was always the Rio Grande river close at our heels, like a faithful dog.

We were fortunate enough to behold a mirage in Arizona—a great sea dotted with green, tempting islands, and three shadowy, ghostlike ships bearing down upon us in full sail; and yet, while our eyes told us all this, there was an interminable sand plain with not a tree, or a shrub, or a green

blade of grass to mitigate the cruel barrenness. For hours and hours the same desolate, hopeless waste environed us—an endless sea of sand—an ocean of whiteness and over it all the burning, scorching sun, beating down as though it could never satiate its fury. It seemed—if one could imagine such a thing—like nature without a God.

I think Yuma was the most interesting town along the whole route. Our train had scarcely drawn itself alongside the pretty little station, when we found ourselves surrounded by the Yuma Indians. They bore down upon us from every possible point, and assumed every possible posture; ranging themselves like a gay frieze against the white clayey mounds, or overrunning the car platforms, and proved themselves as curious and socially disposed as ourselves. The women were bestrung with beads, and I am fain to confess that their garments were of the scantiest. One young girl wore merely a huge strip of red flannel held on by means of innumerable brass safety pins; another wore several yards of red uncut handkerchiefs, draped something like a Roman toga across her pretty shoulders, for they were beautifully rounded in spite of their brown hue, and her features were regular, even though they were daubed and disfigured by yellow ochre.

Is there anything in all this world more delightful than traveling? To feel all your senses tuned to a fine receptive mood; to find yourself living in the heart of strange scenes; to go whirling over grand canons; to span wild romantic rivers; to skirt the base of huge solitary mountains; to rush up two or three hundred feet above the level of the sea, and then to rush down again as many feet below it—and all the time curving and twisting like a tormented serpent. It made me think of nothing so much as a gigantic toboggan slide with a huge roller coaster adjustment.

The train is drawing near Los Angeles. I know it by the universal strapping of bags, the unprecedented activity of the porter, the brushing of hats, the finding of umbrellas. I know it by the jovial farewells interchanged, by the universal satisfaction and delight pictured on every face, for how else but in happiness and brightness should a mortal enter the “City of the Angels?”

I wonder if any power of words could properly depict the beauties of Los Angeles? I had heard about it, read about it, and thought that I was prepared for it; but it all smote upon my eyesight

like a revelation; and still I wonder, and still the wonder grows, and never once have I sallied forth from the pretty street where I have my abiding place that my lips have not poured forth a series of rapturous exclamations.

It happens very pleasantly for us that we are in the highest portion of the city, a sort of Muezzin's tower, eighty feet above the compact business portion that clammers up from all sides. When I stand at a near street corner, pressing eagerly 8 against a stout iron railing, my range of vision above the level of the highest church steeple, I can think of nothing so much as of a vast cyclorama. I can point my steps east, west, north and south, still the city lies at my feet, still the pretty toy-like villas, nestling in their orange groves and vineyards, sparkle forth like jewels in the sunshine; and then come the illimitable level plains, like one great emerald, and above and beyond them all, clasping and girding city, and villa, and plain, tower the great mountain peaks.

The Sierra Santa Monica and the San Jacinto Mountains, portions of the Coast Range, take on misty violet hues, soft lines against the sky, and sometimes parting their mistiness like a curtain reveal tiny glimpses of the great Pacific, eighteen miles away; but the black Sierra Madre always pierces the fair, blue sky in unchanging sternness. It never softens; it never lowers its standard of supreme command; it never takes on fine and fickle coloring, or grows misty with sympathetic tears. You see it not at all, or you see it in all its majestic grandeur—a mighty range, an awful prophecy, a soul-thrilling mystery.

There is something in the crisp, rarified air of this pretty city that acts like a stimulant upon the human system. Take a walk down Spring street (the principal thoroughfare) any bright, sunny day, 9 and you will be struck by the keen, tingling thrill of life. There are no loafers, no dawdlers, no gossipers, no obstructers of the public highway. Even the bootblacks are relegated to their apportioned recesses, and the transplanted bore forgets, in the pushing throng, to buttonhole his victim. Even the horses do not jog and trot along, as in other cities, but tear down the streets as though the whole city was a racecourse, and each horse believed itself another Maud S.

There are no end of runaways, and every time Marion and I have been to drive we have feared each moment was our last. A spirit of venture and risk flows through every vein of the city. Street car riding, which is tame and commonplace enough as a rule, partakes here of the perilous and thrilling. Most of the cars are run by cables. To see one coming down a precipitous incline is startling; to ride in one of the open cars is quite as daring a feat as keeping yourself in an Irish jaunting car. I confess I shut both eyes and hold on with both hands, and feel delightfully reckless.

I don't think any one could ever be slow, or sluggish, or dispirited in these parts. It is the land of hope and aim and ambition. The very atmosphere teems with gigantic enterprises; the sound of the hammer and the trowel greets you in every direction; massive structures are rising like magic 10 from every point within a business radius, and there are no limits to the number of buildings planned.

This unparalleled push and energy would be a matter of universal exclamation if Los Angeles were not in California, and California not in America. Why, there are roads enough graded, and sufficient lots staked out to equal the area of New York City, and all this has been accomplished in thirteen years, since the energies of the East have found the fertility of the West. What will it come to? How will it end? are questions of the hour.

I saw to-day at Inglewood—a place ten miles from the city limits of Los Angeles, and whose first house was built eight months ago—miles of the finest cement banquette, bordering a far-reaching field of yellow grain. It is true that there several houses going up, and a large hotel nearly completed; but think of the amount of capital required to grade miles upon miles of streets, build reservoirs, bore artesian wells, plant flowers, lay out orange groves and construct city pavements; to build in such a place, without any surety of people! it is very much like putting the cart before the horse. There is no end to those newly-sprung places. They form a perfect net-work about Los Angeles.

It is the easiest thing in the world to be drawn 11 into the land fever. Real estate offices are as plentiful as bees on an August day. You pass along and you see some such sign as the following:

—”Bargain! For one day, Tract of land, Utopia, \$25 to \$100 per lot.” This looks interesting; to buy a lot of land for \$25 and sell it, perhaps, in a week or two for \$50, titillates the mercenary palate. You are like a dull fly in the toils of an affable spider, with this difference, that, nine times out of ten, you take your turn at being the spider and some one else becomes the fly.

Undoubtedly Southern California is the garden spot of America, and judging from its past prosperity and progress it must hold a magnificent future. No one, even the most prejudiced, can dispute its advantages. The most stolid and lymphatic native must be stung into an appreciation of his country's resources and dream that he has reached that Biblical land flowing with milk and honey.

Think of a country where, on any casual drive, you will pass acres of growing vegetables, of every known variety; drive through long avenues of orange groves, see the peach, apricot, nectarine, fig, almond, walnut, lemon, banana and olive growing side by side with equal thrift and luxuriance. Think of the miles upon miles of vineyards, the yield of wine alone; bear in mind an unequalled fertility of soil in an unequalled climate; fancy a picturesqueness of situation outrivaling an Alpine village; cast your mind's eye over mountain, meadow, valley and river, with the blue skies always warm, and the ocean breezes always cool, in a country possessing everything and lacking nothing; do you wonder at the boom? 13

## II.

### HOSPITALITY OF THE LOS ANGELEANS—CATHEDRAL OF THE QUEEN OF THE ANGELS—A TRIP THROUGH CHINATOWN—A JAUNT TO SANTA MONICA.

LOS ANGELES, May 25, 1888.

To saunter about the streets of Los Angeles is to conceive a wonderful idea of the Los Angeles' hospitality. Even from the tiniest cottage (and they nearly all seem like toy habitations) dangles the notice of accommodation. It is exceptional when you discover a house lacking the printed formula of “furnished rooms;” and the bright, cozy little domiciles, with the roses running merrily

over the roof, or peeping slyly into my lady's chamber, or laying soft fingers across the published privilege of entrance, make their way into your heart, and your provisional home is settled in the usual adventitious manner.

It is not at all the thing to sleep and eat in the same house. Everyone is a Bohemian, a civilized nomad, and finds his meals wherever fate lands him. If he discovers the aching void while he is in the adobe town, he asks the handsome, dark-eyed señorita for hot tamales and chocolate. If he 14 is in Chinatown he gets a cup of delicious tea and a bird's nest. If he feels flush he crosses the elegant threshold of "Koster's;" if poor he tries the "Silver Moon," where, for twenty-five cents, you get soup, several kinds of meat, all vegetables in the market, ice-cream, pie and coffee. You can live like a prince, or you can dine luxuriously as a pauper.

There is an old cathedral down in adobe town, the "Cathedral of the Queen of the Angels," where I rather like to find myself. It is built of adobe, and has no special architecture, being low and broad, with an ill-proportioned attempt at cruciform, and possessing an altogether familiar and undignified air, standing forth on Main street like some rotund, worldly abbot, brushing his skirts against the sordid stream of human life. Passing through a graveled yard, with a great wooden paintless cross set in its center, you find the side entrance. The door is always open; you pass inside and see a wooden floor, worn into little shelving hollows by the friction of faithful feet. It is the oldest looking, darkest, dingiest sort of a church imaginable, though built in 1823, and comparatively in its prime. The straight-backed, wooden pews are cut and scarred, and boast neither cushions or stools. Against the low, white walls, the different stations of the cross are marked by crude lithographic representations. 15

The three altars are crowded together at the farther end, possessing much trumpery and tinsel, with little of that true dignity and solemnity with which the Catholic Church is so widely associated. But in the low church tower there is a chime of bells brought from far Spain, and every Sunday morning, when the dark-eyed señoritas wend hither to shrive them of their sins, the bells peal forth in soft, mellow notes, as an abbot's sun-kissed wine pours from the flagon.

I often punctuate my walks by a quiet seat in this unlovely sanctuary, for its very mustiness is redolent of those old days when the sun lay in long lazy bars across the clustering adobes; when the Mexican with his broad sombrero, and the senorita with gleams of bright gold swinging from her ears, lived their dreamy, purposeless lives, and weened not of the great city that was to spring up and crush out their sunny solving of existence.

What a queer race are the Chinese! I cannot get used to them, although they are as frequently met on the streets of Los Angeles as the negro in New Orleans. Every time I pass the almond-eyed Celestial, with his blue blouse and his long black queue, I find myself turning to gaze at him as though he were the very first of his race my eyes had ever rested upon. To see them jauntily swaggering down the street, going into raptures in their heathenish lingo over the pretty goods in the shop windows, causes me to stand still and stare at them, until I am run down by somebody in a speculative humor. And so, when it was proposed that we should make up a party and take a tour through Chinatown, you may know that I was pleased.

It was 9.30 o'clock when we reached the plaza—which is, by the way, the center of the town from which everything radiates, even Chinatown—and scarcely had we reached this open space when our eyes were greeted with several magnificent lanterns, seeming to be of glass, beautifully cut, set in antique bronze, and our ears were assailed with sounds like a frenzied beating upon all the battered tins in the neighborhood. As we came nearer we distinguished a man's voice, in thin falsetto, finding the range of musical harmony in the dull monotony of two notes at a high C pitch. It was a curious crowd (not meant for a pun) that gathered in front of these musicians. The streets all about were crowded with Celestials, seemingly entranced by the dulcet tones that the deficiencies of my education debarred me from appreciating.

Well! we were the most impertinent, prying set of people you would care to meet. We stopped at nothing; that is to say, we halted at everything. 17 Down the narrow, lantern-hung streets there was not a single window that our eyes slighted. We gazed into a barber shop and saw a man under the interesting operation of having his queue dressed. We passed meat-markets, cook-shops, tailoring establishments, with Chinamen industriously plying the needle. We insinuated our way



into tempting tea-stores, and inveigled pretty, steaming, teapots from their cushioned cozies, and drained the tiny cups, inwardly convinced that the best milk and sugar in the world was a novelty. We smiled our way into the midst of a game of dominoes where the fumes of opium permitted but a glance. We confided to a docile-featured Celestial our overweening desire to count “a la Chinois,” and he very patiently sought to instruct our dumb understanding. We made our way into the principal Chinese restaurant and saw the chopsticks and the absinthe glasses ranged in regular rows on the great round tables. We were permitted to enter the sacred precincts of the kitchen, and I confess I gave way to a spasmodic shiver, as though an imaginary mouse had suddenly scuttled across my path. As we came forth from the stronghold of steaming pans and mingled savors, two little Chinese children, a girl and boy, aged four and six respectively, rushed up to us, put out their hands and cried “helloa.” They were both decked out in 18 all sorts of colors, and were strung with a multitude of beads and gold ornaments. The little girl had her hair drawn smoothly back from her forehead in a low, plaited coil, wreathed with artificial pink roses, which gave her a quaint, old-young appearance. Their unexpected salutations, together with the startled sensation of their clammy finger-tips, took me so by surprise that I had barely time for a glance and an exclamation before their tiny figures had disappeared, as though by the stroke of some magician's wand.

I wonder what Chinatown thought of us? We never stopped to ask. We drank their tea and ate their candy, and went on our way as merry as you please. When we met glum looks we simply laughed all the more, though they were, on the whole, inclined to be patient and long-suffering, and took all we said, and did, and asked in good part. They even taught us a little Chinese, but the only bit of it I can remember now is something that sounds like “change your luck,” but which means “good-by.”

It seems to me that the sky is bluer, that the grass is greener, that the earth is brighter and browner in Los Angeles than elsewhere. The exceeding brilliancy of coloring whimsically suggests to me certain feverishly-bought 19 chromo-lithographs in a well-remembered window on Royal street, and the clumps and avenues of eucalyptus trees, dotting here and there the far-away yellow plains, bring childish impressions of primly-fashioned, arsenically-nurtured toy trees, uncertainly

balanced against a forlorn array of torn and mangled tin soldiers. Only beneath their branches am I disillusioned. Only when I can no longer see their tops do I believe them to be trees in very truth.

The pepper is *par excellence* the tree of Southern California. Its ugly trunk is redeemed by the soft, lace-like filaments of its leaves; and in the still, glorious moonlight nights that we have here, it casts misty, fern-like shadows like one of Corot's dreams.

Last week Marion and I took a day's jaunt to Santa Monica, the nearest ocean outlet of the Los Angeleans, where they take their pleasure trips, and place their picnics and get a dip in old mother ocean. There were ten cars packed to overflowing, and we were forced, for lack of better expedients, to find seats in an immigrant sleeper; but the full force of the unpleasant position did not dawn upon me until the upper berths were let down and a fringe of masculine legs, swaying like ill-balanced pendulums, blocked the passage-way. I pressed 20 my face against the window, determined not to be cheated out of an iota of pleasure and to prove myself utterly obtuse to disagreeable conditions, for it had been one of the tenets of our trip that we should accept Mark Tapley's principles, and contemplate the most untoward and unpropitious events in the cheerful attitude of adventure; and so, long before the train was fully under way, my momentarily-misplaced tourist temper had come back to me, and all my petty pruderies had melted away in the curl of the engine's smoke. I sincerely believe there is nothing in the whole realm of practical philanthropy that so readily wears away the angles and transforms a narrow, bigoted, egotistical nuisance into a comfortable, jovial, enthusiastic being as a railroad ticket in one's pocket and a car roof above one's head.

I need not tell you that the day was bright and beautiful, for every day is like unto another, and plans are never clogged with a mass of meteorological contingencies, and the fair sex is not prone to go about with that hideous adjunct of precaution—a gossamer. One may never wake in the morning listening to a drowsy summer shower, or seek slumber at night beneath the gentle pattering of rain upon the roof, for summer will be over, and fall and winter will have come, ere another rainstorm. 21

As we went speeding through the vast patches of vineyards, willow-green in the sunlight, dust-drowned in lurking shadow, I wondered if in paradise we could be quite content, if one might not be brought to beg the penalty of pain to lend an added zest to pleasure; for in all this broad, beautiful, southland heaven has proclaimed one solitary denial—its summer tears—and for those tears earth, sea, and sky seem ever to cry aloud!

Science has, however, outwitted nature, and vineyards, orange groves, orchards and market gardens are kept in a thriving condition through an artificial system of irrigation by means of innumerable *zanjas* (pronounced sankeys), which are nothing more or less than deep ditches filled with water and banked up high on each side with earth. Twice or thrice during the summer these earth banks, which look like miniature levees, are cut away, and the water rushes out upon the thirsty land until it has drunk its fill; then the tiny crevasse is mended and a cut is made in another portion of the *zanja*, and so on until the whole field is irrigated. Of course it is some little trouble, but it looks more than it really is, for the labor is necessarily of a negative complexion, and the small outlay of extra effort is met at by an unparalleled ratio of return. 22

These *zanjas* lay on either side of the railroad nearly the whole distance between Los Angeles and Santa Monica, a matter of some eighteen miles, and here we caught sight of a group of blue-bloused celestials picking those crimson, luscious berries whose fiat of departure has already gone forth; then we brushed past gleaming orange groves, with fruit and flower in equal mastery, and far away, dotting the illimitable grain fields, the eucalyptus told where tiny towns had died in their conception; and still behind the yellow plains that the mountains seemed fairly to trample over in their haste to reach us, “Old Baldy,” the hoary-crested, the highest peak of the Sierra Madre, towered like an aged servitor over the pretty, shining little dot upon the landscape that calls itself Los Angeles.

From the bay window of the hotel I caught my first view of the Pacific. My impression was that the window overhung the ocean, so completely was my vision drowned in blue. It was not the blue of the Atlantic, but a tender, silvery green, melting into mellow turquoise and darkening at the horizon's rim into a strand of purest sapphire; and over it all there lingered a mystic magic, a luring

Lorelei, a furtive fantasy of moods, that kept my eyes bewitched and held my steps enthralled. And 23 then when my gaze wandered from right to left it was to discover a silver crescent of sand, reaching its white arms out in silent invitation to the blue, and back from sea and sand sprang the white perpendicular cliffs, and behind all, frowning down like some silent mentor at a love feast, rose the dark peaks of the Cahuenga Range. There were many bathers tossing in the surf, many more lying in the warm, soft sand and making of themselves mock grave-diggers. But I did not care to look at the people; I had not come to see them, but to paint a picture upon my mental canvas, and even as I write the picture spreads out before me, and I wonder how many days will come to me that will equal this red-lettered day at Santa Monica. 24

### III.

THE CITY OF THE GOLDEN GATE—WONDERFUL SHOPS AND TAILOR-MADE GIRLS—AN OLD MISSION.

SAN FRANCISCO, June 6, 1888.

Here we are, Marion and I, in fascinating Frisco! The Palace Hotel, that world-famed caravansary, is but a block away from us. Before we had been an hour in the city we were traversing its corridors, gazing in acute admiration at its beautifully marbled court, and eyeing with intense interest a crowd of “Raymonds,” over whose calm, conservative features was spread that light of ineffable culture which marks the true Bostonian.

But the very first thing that caught my eye in the Palace Hotel, in fact the thing that made me stop before I had gone six paces along the marble corridor, was *The Times-Democrat* upon one of the news-stands. Glancing at its familiar face with the mental reservation that it might prove to be a California paper of the same name, I walked up and covertly turned its folded pages. It was the New Orleans *Times-Democrat*, in truth. If I had been a man, I would have bought that paper; being a 25 woman, and a woman without a pocket, I passed on with the sense of a genial hand-clasp lingering about my fingers.

If cable-car riding was thrilling in Los Angeles, it is positively terrifying here. It is an alternation of shooting up into the sky like a rocket, and rushing down apparently into the very bowels of the earth. So perpendicular are several of the hills that we, sitting in the rear of the car, completely lost sight of those in the front seats; and this lasted the length of three or four blocks. Only when we reached a bit of level ground did I dare take breath and enjoy the wondrous views that our swift, bird-like circling afforded us.

I cannot truthfully say that the City of San Francisco is a beautiful one; but it is strangely unique, possessing like New Orleans characteristics peculiar to itself. “Knob Hill,” one of the highest points in the city, commanding a vast and extended view, boasts a number of bonanza residences, all elegant and costly structures, the bronze fence of the Flood mansion costing alone \$100,000. A bird's-eye view of the city shows an interminable mass of wooden buildings, not drowned in green or softened by clambering vines, but standing out, every point and pinnacle bare, in the brazen sunshine. There is scarce a tree to be seen in any direction you may choose to look. The general impression is barrenness. It seems like a city planted in a desert; for around and about it are sand dunes and barren wastes and treeless mountains, and only the beautiful bay saves it from an indescribable desolation of appearance.

This is, of course, a bird's-eye view of the city. In its immediate center all is bustle and business—the fire and energy of a great metropolis—and I have never seen more beautiful goods, or more magnificent stores, or broader streets, or more stylish women. The tailor-made girls look fresh from the hand of “Redfern,” and have most charming complexions and possess an air of “go” that is altogether fetching. I suppose it must be the climate, for with the wind always blowing you about and cutting your cheeks like fine knife edges, how could the aesthetic girl preserve her proper pose?

Golden Gate Park is a wonderfully pretty place, perfectly kept and with a conservatory unequalled by that of any other American city. Plants from all points of the world are found here; rare orchids, magnificent palms, misty ferns, and there is also a wondrous pink lily blooming by the side of the gigantic pods of the Victoria Regia. The conservatory—or conservatories, for there are many in one—was bought from the James Lick estate by a number of public-spirited men, and presented

by 27 them to the park. A most acceptable gift it has proven, reaching all classes and conditions of men, judging from the delighted crowds that I saw hovering over the beautiful greenery. Outside are dazzling beds of flowers and foliage plants in every form and fashion of design. The walks and drives have not a pebble cast astray on them. The trees and grass have such a vivid green in the bright sunshine that I found myself winking and blinking at an amazing rate.

On a soft velvety mound under a clump of trees, a couple of small boys were rolling like young kids; near them was a picnic party with lunch spread out. Then for the first time, it came over me what it is that is so peculiar about this park; there are no policemen and no restrictions against treading on the beautiful grassy carpet. Babies and children trot over it, mothers sit on it, men lounge under the trees with book or newspaper, lovers make short cuts across it to reach each other. It is literally a park free to the people, and every man, woman and child within its gates a policeman pro tem.

If one wishes a superb view of the Pacific he will go to the Cliff House. It is but a short distance outside the city, and it takes only twenty minutes to reach it by the dummy line. Here are the great Seal Rocks, and for a long time we sat on 28 the high galleries, watching the sea lions sunning themselves, playing here and there with each other, diving occasionally into the ocean, and keeping up all the time a series of ululations like the baying of dogs at the moon. Beyond, swamping all things, lay the emerald and turquoise and sapphire of the Pacific Ocean, bounded by the great brown, barren, treeless mountains. There is something cold and cruel in these great, desolate peaks, with not a tree or a shrub or a house to soothe their rugged promontories; only range upon range of blank, brown cones; only miles upon miles, to the horizon rim, of watery waste. This is the picture, but its grandeur lies in the sharp, keen, cruel accentuation of one against the other. A nobler picture never lived before mens' eyes than here, where mountain peak and watery waste swear eternal antipathy.

We have spent hours wandering through Chinatown. We have looked a great deal, and we have bought very little—a feminine peculiarity; but we have admired everything, even the Chinese babies. We have talked with the women, and we have tried the patience of the men. We have called

everything lovely, from a hideous caricature down to a back-scratcher; and the Chinamen quite agree with us, echoing our words with the flavor of an original discovery. 29

Night is the time to see Chinatown in all its glory, which means with all its lanterns lighted. The streets are very narrow, not much more than alleyways, and look smaller even than they are because of these fanciful illuminations, which give to them a fantastic gala appearance.

And such crowds of blue-bloused Chinamen! Such quantities of black gossamer-like material wasted upon the women! Up and down the streets they poured like so many ants rushing for their anthill. Every now and then we would come upon a dark passageway, sometimes with a perforated green curtain hanging before it, sometimes not; but always with a Chinaman behind a half-closed iron door. These were the gambling dens, and a Caucasian has only to take two steps in the direction of this watchful sentinel when, presto! the door shuts like a shot. Neither policeman or detective is quick enough to make the passageway before the flash of that iron door; consequently gambling reigns triumphant in the face of the law.

We could not gain entrance to any of the theaters, it being some feast day; but I was rather glad of this, for we went one night in Los Angeles, and between the monotonous rasping of the instruments and the alarming symptoms of bronchitis manifested by the whole company, I resolved to avoid further experience of a like painful nature. 30

But we found the Joss-house up two flights of stairs, built on a sort of roof which looked very pretty, with jars of green plants ranged along the edges. A Chinaman sat out on this roof before the Joss-house and waited for us to enter, which we were very swift in doing. So swift, in fact, that we nearly ran over a group of Chinamen smoking their long pipes just inside. The room was full of smoke and it was some moments before we could see clearly. There was a great deal of gilt work, a sort of chancel in gilt inclosed in a glass case that nearly divided the room, and inside of this there was something that resembled a gilded altar, and in its very center, which formed a sort of shrine, were three wooden images—a very red-faced Joss, and two less luminous satellites. Tapers were burning in their honor, and a very stale-looking cup of tea held a prominent position.

Walking out on Market street the other day, a blue car came along, and as it halted for a passenger I read, among other points of its destination, "The Dolores Mission." This was what I had all along wanted to see—an old mission. So I pulled Marion along, we sprang upon the dummy, and off it flew as though shot out of a catapult. The mission is out in the poorer portion of the city, very far away from the center of life and trade, though once its little cluster of buildings 31 was all that boasted of the white man's civilization.

This mission was built in 1776 by the Indians under the Franciscans' direction. It is, of course, adobe. Its architecture—if one may use so large a word for so primitive an attempt—is Gothic. There are two rows of sunken Ionic columns upon its front, and three great bells brought from Spain let into their proper apertures in the solid masonry above the columns. There is a cross upon the pointed roof and plain arched wooden doors give entrance. It is one of those places you long to sketch.

It is very odd-looking inside, the ceiling of rough boards being painted red, white and blue, somewhat like a barber's pole, only the colors are worn and faded now. The one aisle with its two rows of straight wooden pews leads up to the altar of white-painted wood, behind which, in place of marble or stained glass window, is a reredos reaching to the ceiling, of strangely-carved, gaudily-painted wooden figures. This also came from Spain. It must have been the delight of the Indians when it arrived, all fresh paint and glittering gold; but a hundred years have dimmed its luster. The figures look dusty and worn, and more or less mutilated, and one feels sorry for them, somehow, they have so far outlived their Indian friends. One would call it a poor old 32 church, for its walls are bare and its windows are of white-painted glass, and at every other step along the wooden floor your feet sink down into beds of soft, spongy decay. But in another way it is a rich old church. History paints rare pictures on its poor walls; one can fancy the Franciscan Fathers elevating the Host before their dusky worshippers—nay, with a ray of sunshine one can feel the full glory of those wondrous, carven images; one may catch the murmur of a bygone chant, and people the pews with a wronged, wrecked race.



Close by the church, seeking its benediction like a faithful follower, lies an old churchyard, so ruinous that nature seeks to cover up the shattered, crumbling tombstones. Trees have sprung up, and vines have woven barricades, and tender arbors over many an empty, desolate bit of ground, sacred to the ashes of the dead. The church and the churchyard seemed like an ancient couple, with whitened hair and tottering tread, wandering from old friends and old ties—on, on, into the blinding light of a new, unsympathetic era. 33

#### IV.

#### RAPID TRANSIT FOR A NICKEL—THE SEARCH FOR THE GOLDEN GATE—A SUBURBAN HAPPY HOLLOW.

SAN FRANCISCO, June 18, 1888.

If any one should ask me what I consider the most distinctive, progressive feature of California, I should answer promptly, its cable-car system. And it is not alone its system which seems to have reached a point of perfection, but the amazing length of the ride that is given you for the chink of a nickel. I have circled this city of San Francisco, I have gone the length of three separate cable lines (by means of the proper transfers) for this smallest of Southern coins.

It is the economy and value of time, as well as of purse, that is the underlying principle of this great Western slope. In no other city in the Union is the “almighty dollar” more glorified or deified. In New York the race for wealth is for what it brings; here it is for the thing itself. The great mass of people have no home life. They rent rooms and take their meals at restaurants. One might call San Francisco a city of houses 34 without homes, so many residents live the lives of transient tourists, and so many more prefer to shut up their great wooden houses and nestle down in their pretty country homes “across the bay.” It seems part of an unwritten law that a San Franciscan shall not live in San Francisco, for if he is not traveling or existing *a la carte*, the chances are that he is “just across the bay.”

One morning Marion and I started out in quest of “Telegraph Hill,” whence a fine view of the city was promised us. We had to go a long distance on the cars, and finally to climb a hill which fairly took my breath away. I do not recollect now that Marion spoke to me, or I to her, during the whole ascent. We simply dug our heels into the ground and grasped and panted and grew very red in the face; but we “got there.” The view is certainly very fine. You stand in the center of the circular parapet fronting the many-storied observatory and see the city lying in one compact mass as in the hollow of a hand. Every house is built of wood, every house has a bay window, every house is painted a dirty drab. A mass of drab, without a vestige of green, with the yellow graveled streets cutting their way through the drab at intervals—this is San Francisco. Beyond come the sand hills, and still beyond rise the great brown, verdureless peaks, eternally scarred by past passions of volcanic fires. 35

I turned my face away from city and mountain, lying so colorless against an African blue sky, and it seemed like a happiness to meet the shifting colors of the beautiful bay, its waters laving the base of the cliff three hundred feet below. The bay wore drowsy opaline tints, and every now and then we caught glimpses of tiny white steamers, like snowy swans, gliding in and out among the many islands. The black masts of ships hung like a fringe about the city's edge; the waters lay against the great black bulwarks, soft and peaceful as a summer's dream. Alcatraz, the military prison island, shone forth in the bright sunshine like a very pleasant punishment. The bay is filled with islands, not ideal islands of gentle slopes and sighing pines, and clinging vines, and sea-washed boulders; but islands that are mighty in altitude, brown and barren as a burned moorland, and thrusting an equally cruel stab against earth and sky. And yet, set in the beautiful bay, they hold a certain, awful fascination, and you cannot help thinking that all those broken monuments of mountains were hurled there by some violent abnormal disruption, when some other race, an unknown, wiped-out people, lived their little span upon this same old planet.

There are a great many places of interest in this city, and an earnest sight-seer can put in a 36 good bit of hard work. There are many fine churches. The Jesuits' “St. Ignatius” is one of the most beautiful churches in the country. Its proportions are lofty and chaste. Two rows of pillared arches

form the nave, and the coloring is a blending of white, with soft, neutral tints that bring out with rare effect the fine paintings upon its walls. The altar painting is exquisitely beautiful. The stations of the cross are all works of art, each one challenging a long and careful scrutiny. Each of the altars — there are six — is equally beautiful. The figures in the niches are of the purest Carrara marble. The altar cloths are of the finest lace, and the altars themselves built of the most precious marbles, some of them set with precious stones. Beneath two of the altars were open square places like coffins, and on silken pillows, robed in gorgeous vestments, life-size wax figures repose. One of these figures represented “St. Placidus,” and at her feet there is a crystal goblet holding her relics. Another represents a priest with a lily in his hand. Fresh flowers decked the place of worship, and the railings were lined with prayerful kneelers.

I think of all the places we have investigated, the Presidio proved the most interesting. This Presidio is the military station where about five hundred soldiers and officers are quartered. It is 37 on this same site that the Spanish and then the Mexicans had their barracks, before it became an American military post, and there are a couple of old adobe houses that still attest a former foreign ruling of events.

Strangers and tourists are made welcome to these beautiful grounds, and on certain days the band plays, and brings quite a crowd. There happened to be few people the day Marion and I found ourselves there. We strolled freely through all the beautiful avenues, with their outlook upon the bay, lingering under the grateful shadows of the eucalyptus. The officers' quarters are bowers of roses, their plots of ground separated by hedges of geraniums, and the porches shaded with trellises of fuchsias. The pretty grass plots were closely clipped, and beautifully green; palms and shrubs and trees threw soft, loving shadows over this velvet carpet; and turn whichever way you could, there was the bay, and there were the little steamers plying in and out among the islands, and there was Alcatraz with its brick prison, seemingly not more than a stone's throw away, and there was the “Golden Gate” with the great white ships moving through like low-flying sea-gulls.

I do not know how many miles we walked over this place. I know we passed a number of gates and a number of sentinels, and that we went up hill and down dale, through the most 38 perfectly-

kept grounds, past overhanging masses of color in a wild anarchy of rebellion. I know that I wanted to get the nearest view of the “Golden Gate,” and that when we came to the flume we walked along on that because it promised us “Fort Point “ the sooner. I was told afterward that we walked between seven and eight miles. But it did not seem such a distance, for the day was bright and the air bracing, and the occasional dash of sea-spray upon our faces was like an aromatic exhilarant. When we reached “Fort Point,” after many perilous balancings upon the flume, we sat down on some rocks by the shore and rested. The “fort,” a square, red brick affair, stood forth directly in front of us. My mind was still exercised about the “Golden Gate.” Here we had wandered on and on, and I could not see it. The wife of one of the soldiers passing near me, I asked, “Will you please tell me where I can get the best view of the ‘Golden Gate?’”

She looked at me a moment with a smile of pitying magnanimity. “Bless you! it ain't a real gate,” she returned.

“Indeed,” I said, with an expression of interest.

“Oh, no! it ain't any gate; its just two great rocks,” she went on good-naturedly.

I thanked her and she passed on. By this time I was quite disgusted with our “Golden Gate” expedition, for I was tired, and there lay the long winding way back to the Presidio proper, every 39 step of which we must walk. When we got back I found that “Fort Point,” where we had sat down to rest, was one arm of the” Golden Gate.” No wonder we couldn't see it, when we were fairly on it! I am not quite sure now whether the joke was on the soldier's wife or on me—whether it was “The Lady or the Tiger.”

If you want to see one of the prettiest, sweetest little spots in the world, take a trip to San Rafael, some seventeen miles from San Francisco. If you want to get away from the wind, and the dust, and the drab wooden houses, and treeless streets, take the ferry at the foot of Market street to Saucilito, and from there the train to San Rafael. We enjoyed this trip more than I can tell. The ferry takes you some little distance down the bay, and the morning that we went, there were several Italians on board, who gave us some very inspiring music. We passed under the shadow of Alcatraz,

and wound in and out among the island mountains, in the same zigzag pathway we had noted the steamers pursuing from our vantage point on “Telegraph Hill.”

Saucilito itself is a pretty little village on the side of a high mountain, with the houses overtopping each other, like the many stories of a Nuremburg mansion. I longed to stop there, to clamber up some of the refreshingly green heights, to get a view of the bay and the islands, and the 40 city—a dim, hazy blot in the distance—but we were hurried on with the crowd in the direction of the waiting train, and ere we had gained our seats were being rushed along to San Rafael. We wound in and out among green mountain heights, soft velvety knolls, avenues and clumps of trees, pretty country homes, and then with a gasp and a snort the train stood still. The name of the station was shouted, and there were our friends, smiling and signaling to us from their carriage.

We spent the day in a family dear to many a New Orleans heart. We wandered about the beautiful gardens, where great masses of color stood out, one against the other, like pigments cast at random on a painter's palette. Pretty children clung about us, and the hostess, a Southern-born woman, plucked great bunches of mignonette and heliotrope, and cut her fairest roses, her stateliest lilies, and filled our arms with the sweet burden. And all the while she smiled and spoke her pleasure at meeting us, and urged us to lengthen one day into many, with such sincerity and interest that I could scarcely believe our acquaintance was a matter of hours, and our introduction a formula of written words.

San Rafael is a sort of “Happy Hollow,” a nest of pretty country homes, and from the green-bordered, winding drives you catch stray glimpses of the bay and its islands. With a wealth of green 41 about you, forests of trees on the mountain sides, great swards of grass, and barley, like an unrolled carpet, low-lying at your feet; with beautiful homes sending a smile of welcome from every turn of the graveled road, a blue sky without a cloud, a breeze without a sting,—this is what you find seventeen miles from the Golden City.

If you were to ask me what was the pleasantest thing that happened to me in Frisco, I would tell you that it was the day I spent “just across the bay.”

Ah, well! Everything must come to an end—sight-seeing and pleasant journeyings; new-made friends must be parted from; the groove of daily, delightful happenings must be disrupted. As I write these closing lines we are crossing the bay to Oakland, *en route* to Los Angeles. It is twilight, deepening into night. The city lies, a blur of mellow lights pendant 'twixt sea and sky. The black masts of ships reach up out of the gathering darkness like sorrowing phantoms. The wind is stilled; the bay spreads out a grewsome, blackened mass, sprent with molten gleamings. On the crowded ferryboat there is a strange hush and quiet. The small boy who sits beside us, submerged in our manifold bundles, watches my moving pen with grave speculation. I wonder if I am sorry that the train is waiting to bear me away? 42

V.

THE RUSH AND BUSTLE OF A WONDERFUL CITY —A VISIT TO THE OSTRICH FARMS  
—SEEING A YOUNG BIRD BURST FORTH FROM ITS IMMENSE SHELL—A PICNIC  
JOURNEY—A VISIT TO THE MISSION OF SAN GABRIEL.

LOS ANGELES, June 26, 1888.

Comparisons are odious, and it may seem even to partake of the ridiculous to compare Los Angeles with such a city as San Francisco, but the truth of the matter is, that the latter will have to make swifter and surer strides to keep long in advance of this pretty, progressive city. I traveled much, and I traveled far in Frisco, and I do not remember to have seen one new building in process of construction. It may have been that I missed the proper quarter for such activity, but here in Los Angeles, where \$5,000,000 are being put into public buildings and improvements, you cannot turn your gaze upon any quarter of the business section that you do not see masses of granite, and brown stone, and brick, rising swiftly to the skies. Banquettes are fenced in for the laying of cement pavements, sand heaps and 43 mortar troughs encumber the streets; the streets themselves are being torn up for the laying of the greatest cable car system in the United States, and the cellar is now being dug to an immense depth to hold the mighty engine.

It is whispered that San Francisco is already growing jealous of this Southern city, and as for San Diego—that it goes off into a convulsive fit at the mere mention of the name. These are rumors, however, that I do not altogether credit, and merely give them for what they are worth. I know that Marion and I are quite happy to be back here again; that we greeted the mountains, and the orange groves, and the vineyards, and the brisk, busy streets with a smile of true affection, and we confided to each other in the midst of our twelve bundles, that there was no place like Los Angeles.

When you purchase those long, lovely ostrich plumes and pass your fingers over their soft, downy substance, are you ever curious about the bird who plumes herself with such rich vestments? It seems to me now that I shall never look upon an ostrich tip, however degenerate and bedraggled, without recalling something of the stately strut of this royal biped.

It was very impromptu—our trip to the ostrich 44 farms—but I question if that it is not the pleasantest way to take time on the wing and leave plannings and plottings to those tiresome specimens of humanity whose professional game is to kill time.

There were four of us in the party, and two very large baskets that elicited our tenderest solicitude. We placed our precious charges in the least vibratory altitude, then fell into a lively quartette, somewhat incoherent from all starting in on a different topic at the same moment, but very picnicky and sociable. As our train ambled through Los Angeles Valley—I cannot call it anything else, we went so slowly and unambitiously—we looked forth upon vast fields of yellow grain, great velvety swards of bearded barley, tiny would-be towns, nestling under the wings of shadowing eucalyptus, mountain peaks like the rim of a cup crowning the low-lying valleys; and then at the end of three-quarters of an hour, with a disjointed jerk, we drew up at Ostrich Farm Station.

For a small consideration we passed into the grounds, pleasantly situated on the side of a slope, and commanding a rare, camera-like view of mountain and valley, falling away together in a dreamy, picturesque perspective. The aim of the owner of these grounds is evidently to suit the manifold tastes of the picnicker, for there are monkeys, and 45 rabbits, and white mice, birds and beasts, a dancing pavillion, a piano and a bar-room, bristling with thirst-quenching prophecies.

We passed along with scarce a glance at these side shows, for we were anxious to face an ostrich — with a stout fence between. We found as we approached that this protective provision was doubly emphasized, for there were two stout wooden railings keeping us at a respectful distance from his majesty, stalking around in solitary grandeur, or stopping to gaze at us with a vicious craning of his long, lean neck. There were twenty fullgrown ostriches, each in a separate pen, or rather open space fenced in. They looked about seven feet high, even taller when they suddenly stretched out their necks. But, oh, the gorgeousness of their wings! Great masses of rich, black, velvety ostrich plumes, drooping off into a snow-white cluster at their tips. I wonder that kings do not renounce the traditional ermine and assume these more majestic emblems of royalty. (These birds are perfectly bare about the neck and legs, and though their whole body is covered with rich plumes, the fullest, and longest and choicest are gathered from their wings.) Twice a year they are plucked, and the annual revenues which they bring to their possessor is, according to all accounts, quite a little fortune. The finest pair are valued at \$800. 46 They live upon alfalfa, a sort of clover (of which this country produces three and four crops a year), pounded oyster shells and corn, their prodigious digestive powers rather snubbed, it seems to me, by this mild diet; perhaps, however, it serves to slacken their depraved propensities, for I was told that only a short time before one of the keepers was picked and bitten to death by the savage onslaught of one of these birds. The ostrich eggs are huge affairs, as large around as a quart measure. They lay out in the open field, and just as I was hanging over the fence, wickedly waving my jacket to make the majestic ostrich perform an undignified pirouette, one of the eggs broke open, and out popped a little ostrich. Immediately there was a great commotion, and everybody rushed breathlessly in our direction. The keeper was told the news, and came hurrying on with ejaculations of surprise. He vaulted the two fences at the farthest distance from the mother-ostrich and made in the direction of the newcomer; but when the mother-bird took long strides in his direction, and manifested a lively curiosity as to his purpose, the keeper vaulted again over the nearest fence and disappeared from the scene.

It was quite comical to see the old bird with her new-born offspring. At first she disdained to notice the little thing, which looked about the size 47 of a two-months-old chicken, and sought to follow the parental guidance by running a few steps and then quite unexpectedly toppling over, or turning



a feeble somersault. I had quite hateful feelings against the mother-bird, who by this time stood prancing before us with her long, beautiful, droopy plumes. I think she saw by our expressions that we did not approve of such Spartan motherhood, such unnatural calming of the emotions, for she immediately turned upon her heel and bestowed a motherly kiss upon her solitary scion. There was thrill of satisfaction along the whole line of spectators when she finally sat herself down upon her nest and drew the ugly duckling under the shelter of her rarely-plumaged wings.

We interviewed our two baskets under a great oak-tree, with the pretty valley spread out before us, and the sunlight and shadow chasing each other across the distant mountain slopes.

A party of friends joining us, we agreed that it would be fun climb a canon. So off we started, now doubled in numbers. It seemed quite delightful, looking up in the direction of our prospective pilgrimage. The mountains were beautifully green, the air was like fine wine, the company inspiring. I started off with buoyant spirits and a wealth of conversation at the head of the party. 48 Very soon I began to lag. I saw some wild flowers that I wanted to pick, and I stopped frequently to look at the view. In a short time my companion and self formed the rear guard of the party. The higher up I went the lower fell my fund of conversation. The beauties of nature were forgotten in the desperation with which I dug my heels into the ground. For one instant I thought of going back, but the going back looked more terrible than the “going on,” and we had struck a solitary trail through bush and brier, where to rest might have meant the loss of both party and pathway.

When we had got half-way up the mountain, there was a perceptible lessening of the general enthusiasm. The men looked tired from the practical tendering of their assistance, but my three original companions, though worn and fagged by the trip, looked unflinchingly at the mountain, and declared with true feminine courage and veracity, that nothing in the world would keep them from going to the top. And it is wonderful how a small boy, appearing at this juncture, could with a couple of discouraging words, turn us about so swiftly to retracing our steps. When, after a few frantic leaps and slidings, we found ourselves safely down, we knew we had suffered a keen disappointment. We told each other so. And not one of us could be forced to confess, even with red hot tongs, that we were glad we met that very small boy. 49

Yesterday three of us started out on a trip to San Gabriel Mission, about twenty minutes ride from here on the Southern Pacific Railroad. This mission is the one point of interest in the sunny, sleepy little village of San Gabriel, dozing away on the broad bosom of the great San Gabriel Valley. Leaving the station, we picked our way through the dusty by-ways, deserted and silent save for the occasional flutter and cackle of some nomadic hen, and at the end of a very few minutes found ourselves facing the mission.

It sits by the roadside, a white-faced, rambling structure built of stone and stucco; but the stucco has fallen away from its sides in many places, and the stones are rounded and worn and mortarless; and the once sharp, clear-cut angles of its architecture have been softened and molded by the many years, until far from its once keen air of reprimand it greets you with a mild mien of reproof.

I do not know how I can picture this old Mission so that you can see it as I saw it—a long, irregular mass of crumbling stucco, lying out in the broad glare of an afternoon sunshine against a blue sky tropical in its brightness. Reaching up into the clear azure, a jagged, gleaming point crowned with an iron cross, is the most interesting portion of the mission. This is where the bells are hung— 50 Spanish bells, with strange inscriptions buried deep in rust and mold; brazen bells, hung on great rafters from hollowed archways, against the background of the sky. And here and there a bell is missing, and only the blue-arched spaces tell where an admonitory voice once dwelled. From this belltower the church extends out into a long, uninterrupted line of white stucco, until at the farther end a flight of solidly mortared steps lead up to a quaint, iron-railed balcony. And to the left of the steps, on a level with the ground, built of dark wood, studded with huge, brazen nails, blackened with rust, the church door swung half-open to the intrusive sunshine. About the threshold gay weeds had sprung up, and from the chinks in the steps, from the rim of the roof, from the very rifts between the rocks, weeds and bushes thrust their ambitious greenery as though triumphing at their high unsanctioned estate, and just above the church door, right on the very face of the church, a tree had taken root and struck out with as much vigor as though on its native soil, in a vertical altitude. The interior of the church is very crude. The floor cemented and worn and sunken. On the the white walls were frameless paintings of such unworthy execution that I did not wonder at their unshrined,

ungilded state. There were only half a dozen pews on either side the only aisle, and 51 behind these wooden benches without backs or footstools. The altar was of plain white-painted wood, with more of those multi-colored carved figures that I had first discovered in the Mission Dolores.

The church was very still, and dim, and cool. We walked up its solitary aisle and sat down in one of the pews. There was no one in the church save ourselves, and a Mexican woman kneeling in a dark corner, with the inevitable black shawl about her head and shoulders. The sounds of summer came in from the open doorway. The birds twittered and circled about a near open window. The Mexican woman drew herself into the shadow of her corner, and we could only now and then catch the glitter of her rosary. The soft, gentle stillness held a seductive charm for us all three. We were loath to leave, and I think, though we did not say it, that we secretly envied that Mexican woman, her faith in her rosary, and her religion.

As we came out into the sunlight we met the priest, a young, fresh-faced, pleasant gentlemen, who, on hearing of our interest in the Mission, showed us the old ruined garden and churchyard, and an old rusty anchor that was said to have come over in the first ship that ever reached the Pacific coast. From the garden he took us into the 52 sacristy and showed us some glittering chasubles wrought by Spanish fingers; but what gave me the rarest delight of all, he brought forth the old Mission Records. Books with worn leather bindings, and rusty brass clasps and musty, worm-eaten pages. He turned to a paragraph in one of these volumes and pointed out the record of a marriage performed in 1771 by Father Junipero, the president of all these Indian Missions, and whose name is held in the same loving remembrance here, as is that of Pere Antoine in the old French quarter of New Orleans.

To be sure these records of births, and marriages, and deaths, were all in Spanish, and not at all intelligible to us, but we hung over the pages with eager interest, and fingered the rough leather bindings with reverential touch, for did we not hold it our hands the ashes of a century's dead?

And do you know those old musty volumes sent me off into strange dreams, and I fell to wondering if it was in just such an old leather-covered book that Ramona's marriage with Alessandro was

recorded? If Father Salvierderra was anything like Father Junipero? If these old Franciscan Fathers, with rough, sandaled feet and rope-cinctured gowns, would not have turned their backs with scorn or the velvet-capped, leather-shod, well dressed priest who stood smilingly relating their sad, solitary, unselfish endeavors. 53

## VI.

THE BEAUTIFUL CITY OF DREAMS—THE ANCIENT MISSION—AN EVELESS EDEN.

SANTA BARBARA, Aug. 17, 1888.

“Let's go to Santa Barbara,” I said one day to Marion.

“Why not?” she answered.

“Why not, of course,” I echoed; and so we came.

We left Los Angeles in the morning train for San Pedro, the nearest harbor, toward the improvement of which, it is reported, many millions have been appropriated by the government. It is a dull, dusty, dreary place enough, and I was glad when the little tug pulled us away from the blinding glare of yellow sand, across the beautiful blue of the Pacific, to the huge sides of the good steamship *City of Puebla*.

There was quite a crowd going North that day, and as we slowly made our way from the little tug that wobbled and bobbed about anything but serenely, there were many jovial prognostications of *mal de mer*, and many teasing suggestions of expedients and remedies. It was very funny and we were all 54 quite hilarious as we climbed the ship's sides; for of course each and every one of us believed ourselves inimical to such petty weakness.

I leaned over the guard-rails and watched the little tug puffing and blowing and disgorging herself of huge Saratogas. No wonder that we talked of seasickness on the little lurching craft; but here,

upon this great, stately steamer, to harbor the thought was impossible! This I said to myself with great impressiveness.

No sooner, however, were we fully under way and well seated at the long dinner table than, oh! such doubts and misgivings beset me. Our seats were very near the engine; there was a triple extract of machinery oil, mixed with the fragrance of dinner; the steamer seemed to be climbing mountains and falling down from precipitous heights; the very floor seemed to rise up under the table; my head began to whirl; I felt that I was growing pale. More than that, the awful thought came to me that everyone else must notice it. I looked up with dogged determination written on my fastblanching features. Of course they would laugh; of course they would go over some of those stale jests that they thought so funny; but to my amazement and relief every pair of eyes was bent upon its respective plate, every face wore a look of premeditated flight, every movement suggested anxious haste. I felt that the moment was mine. I clutched a piece of pilot bread, staggered the whole length of the dining-room, and reached the deck. The fresh air revived me, a lemon cured me, the pilot bread sustained me. And I asseverate, and shall always continue to do so, that a dizzy head is one thing, and *mal de mer* quite another.

The day was a beautiful one. The sky was without a cloud. There was just enough breeze blowing to make it pleasant, and the steamer had ceased her climbing, for the great waters lay all around us like sea of blue glass.

I sat down on a coil of rope in the stern of the boat, and, leaning my head back against a convenient support, I experienced the most delicious sensations. With half-closed, drowsy eyes I watched a flock of seagulls following in our wake. On our right were misty, magic islands; on our left rose the great Coast Range, uninhabited by man. Above and below sky and sea united to swathe us in their glorious blue. I felt that I was sailing—sailing—straight into the land of dreams.

And so indeed I was, for there can be no place more dreamy than Santa Barbara. It is the very soul of dreams, the haunt of dreamers, the dream of dreams. At sundown the grim Coast Range drew back, and there, above a silver crescent, from a peaceful sheltered hollow, Santa Barbara smiled 56

upon us—not a bright, quick smile, but a dreamy, drowsy smile that made me walk the wharf with a half-dazed doubt of its real existence.

Very soon we were being driven up State street, the main thoroughfare, and, in fact, the only thoroughfare. It is very broad, and boasts of asphalt pavement, and reaches from sea to mountain. We are not only at the very base of the mountains; we seem fairly to be a part of them, to have merged our life into theirs. I wonder if it is these great looming solitudes that make Santa Barbara what it is, if it is the sermons written in stone upon these mountain sides that bind its brow with the stillness of an eternal Sabbath? The silence is sentient. It is a place beautiful, but dumb; like an enchanted princess who lies waiting the magic touch of some gallant prince.

From where I sit at my window there is not a sound but the rustle of trees or an occasional footstep. I can scarcely believe that Los Angeles with its bustle and its building boom, is only a matter of a few hours away. But Santa Barbara in winter must be much less quiet, I fancy, for then it becomes the happy hunting ground of the consumptive and the invalid generally, who flee to this Western nook from Eastern rigors, and, according to the local accounts, are invariably cured thereby. 57

If one wants to get away from the world, to cut loose from the race of life, to escape from the web that is being woven of pushing, jostling events; if one wants to be an idler, a dawdler, a dreamer, he will come here. Its very name is like a lullaby, its presence like a draught of its own vintage.

Under these disarming influences it has been hard for Marion and me to assume an alien energy. But that we have done so is evinced by the sleepy stares that follow us, and the exclamations of surprise that meet our discoveries; for we do make daily discoveries, and follow them up too.

We spent a whole morning wandering through Spanishtown, which resembles very closely our own Frenchtown. The houses are low, built of adobe, and with those long, sloping, picturesque tiled roofs that make one wonder why anyone should ever want to exchange them for the prosaic shingle. This Spanishtown is the old Santa Barbara, where Spaniard and Mexican had full sway, and the Indian smoked his pipe in peace. Here and there you run across many a Mexican family, living in an old red-tiled adobe, but the Indian has vanished entirely. He who once ruled this Western slope

can scarcely claim a passing mention. But if the Indian has gone out the Chinaman has come in, and all through Spanishtown, tilting back their chairs and smoking their long pipes on the low 58 verandas, are the almond-eyed Celestials, perfectly placid in their possession.

Beyond this old Spanish settlement, before the progressive American had found his way hither, the presidio stood. In all the places that Spain colonized, the presidio or fort was first built; within this was oftentimes a church; without it clustered a few adobes. All this has, of course, disappeared. The old fortress has returned long ago to the dust from whence it came, and only a few can point out to you the place where it once stood; we found it only by steady, persevering inquiry.

And in those old presidio days, doubtless the Indians gazed, awe-struck, at the smart, red-tiled buildings that Marion and I look upon now as relics, pathetic relics, of a departed day.

As we stood gazing upon one of these crumbling remnants, a dark-eyed Mexican boy came along, and noting our evident interest in ruins, began telling us of an old Mexican woman one hundred and four years old. Of course we determined to visit her, taking the small boy as a guide and interpreter. Think of it! a woman who had lived, perhaps, in the presidio days; a woman who had seen a fortress rise out from. and crumble back into, dust; a woman who had withstood the varying fortunes of a century, who had witnessed the fate of three 59 races—was there not a record here to be read more marvelous than in many adobes?

We followed our small boy through many and devious ways, past dusty highways, and through garden patches, and, finally, when I looked at him sternly and asked where he was taking us, he pointed placidly to a low, white-painted adobe, and ran on ahead to inform them of their approaching visitors.

We were ushered by our guide into a cool, darkened room (for these adobe houses are the coolest in the world), and taking our places on two black horsehair chairs ranged against the wall, we waited. The floor was bare, and, except for the chairs and a large wooden table in the center of the room, there was no furniture, and no attempt at cheap ornamentation. Everything was exquisitely neat and

clean, and between the half-closed shutters a breeze came sweeping in, making it delightfully fresh and sweet.

Presently, through a darkened passageway, there came an apparition so old and bent and doubled that I came near giving a cry of terror; but when she came nearer, I saw that her snow-white hair crowned a kindly face. She took my hand, seemed glad that we had come to call upon her, motioned us to be seated, and said something in Spanish. 60 Before our small interpreter could tell us what it was, a younger woman who takes care of her and at whose house, she lives, came in, and I judged from her volubility of greeting that she was glad to see us. What she said I know no more than the man in the moon. Our interpreter made many efforts to convey to our dumb understanding the gist of her words; but she bore down upon him like an incoming tide, and put out effectually his feeble efforts. Seeing that there was no hope of understanding a word she said, that she was not willing to wait for the boy to translate to us, I began talking with an equal amount of vigor. I looked at the old woman, who had let her head fall upon an arm of the chair, and who was still smiling at me, and asked a stream of questions. And there we sat, and talked, and laughed, without one understanding, a word that the other said; but when we rose to leave I mastered the one Spanish word in my vocabulary. Taking the old woman's hand in mine, I murmured, "*Adios.*" I clasped the roughened palm of the younger woman, and looking into her honest eyes I again repeated, "*Adios,*" and I think she understood how much that word stood for. She followed us out into her little garden, and leaning over the white-painted fence, her figure half buried in marigolds, and phlox, and geraniums, she still smiled and waved her apron, calling after us, "*Adios, adios, adios!*" 61

But what gives to Santa Barbara an added luster, or rather, what lends to it an exceptional quaintness, is its Mission. The Mission of Santa Barbara stands forth from all the Missions of California. Here a few of the Franciscan fathers still hold their sway, here a handful of monks still peacefully pursue their daily lives of prayer and routine. The Mission stands on a high elevation, overlooking the little town of Santa Barbara, with a wondrous view of crescent beach and bay and broad blue ocean. It is a stately structure, probably the finest, as it was the last built, of all the Missions. As you approach it, you are impressed by its appearance, but drawing nearer, you



are conscious only of regrets; for the long wing, with its broad corridor and Spanish archways, has shaken off its old roofing of Spanish tiles, and shines smart and brisk in the sunshine with the modern American shingle, and the church itself of Greek inspiration, flanked by two square belfry towers, boasts new adobe upon its facade, and fresh paint upon its doors. It is said to be the only mission kept in repair, but I could almost wish it might disclaim such honor, so incongruous are modern touches upon this mellow bit of Spanish picturing. I have said that the Mission was impressive; I might say that it was elaborate, and even grand. A flight of a dozen or more broad stone steps form an open 62 plaza before the main entrance door, which, low-arched and built of sturdy wood, iron stanchioned, is flanked on each side by sunken Ionic columns, capped by a molded frieze of Grecian pattern and surmounted by a low, broad triangular roof, with stone statues of Santa Barbara balancing it at either end, and a huge iron cross outlined against the bright blue sky from the highest central pinnacle. To right and to left loom the square, high belfry towers with their Spanish bells clanging the hour of matins and vespers, and to the left is the long wing whose Spanish archways have been so often pictured and photographed. Above the archways and under the newly-shingled roof, are a series of windows that let light into the cells of the monks, and give them also glimpses of a world peaceful as paradise.

When the doors of the church were opened we wandered in. We found it much larger and with more attempt at decoration than any of the other missions we had seen. Weird Indian designs, such as one may find on Aztec vases, form a frieze about the church, stud the ceiling, and completely cover the pillars and archways that lead from the entrance door. The proportions of the church are long and narrow, lending a dim dignity to the faraway altar. On each side, as you move along the one main aisle, are minor altars, each one fenced 63 in with an iron railing, reminding one of funereal demarcations. Before the main altar, which gives proof of more Indian handiwork, there are, I should think, about a dozen pews on each side of the aisle. The walls are painted white, and being eight feet thick, the church is cool and delightful. A row of high, deep-sunken windows let in both air and light. It was so still that my ears rang with the silence. There was not a soul in the church save ourselves. We wandered about with muffled footsteps and spoke in whispers,

thinking, perhaps, of the Indians who, a hundred years ago, toiled to build the church, and whose only message and monument today rests within these missions.

In the center of the church, midway between the entrance and the main altar, on each side of the thick adobe walls, are two arched doorways. The one on the right hand swung open, and we saw that it led into the old churchyard. In a few moments we had crossed the worn and sunken door sill, and were pacing among the graves and rank weeds. Above the door from which we had made our exit, three human skulls and crossbones are imbedded in the solid masonry. This rear portion of the church still preserves its picturesque tiled roof, and there is a high fence of solid masonry that shuts in the churchyard from the broad highway running close beside it. I have never seen 64 any spot in my life that seemed so near to perfect peace as that old, rank, ruined churchyard. Its sweetness and silence were beyond interpretation. Sitting down upon the worn sill I leaned my head against the crumbling mortar. Before me rose the great mountain peaks wearing a Sabbath silence; above was the cloudless blue of the heavens. All about me was the peculiar quiet that always rests upon a burial plot. Against the garden wall a huge walnut tree cast its shadow and brushed its leaves; under the red-tiled roof doves cooed and circled.

Suddenly voices broke upon the silence. It was the Franciscan Fathers, high up in their cloistered choir above the main entrance, chanting their daily devotions. Out of the door across the old church yard, to the great mountain heights, the low, sweet melody drifted, and the leaves of the walnut-tree murmured something very like a response, and the doves gave forth a low, sad note like a sympathetic "Selah." Then there was silence again.

I do not know how long I might have sat in that old churchyard, borne away from all mundane matters, if I had not heard a bolt drawn suddenly behind me, and turning I saw a monk open the door facing to the one where I sat. Kneeling down opposite the altar, he began murmuring 65 his prayers. He was dressed in a coarse brown woolen gown cowled and cord-cinctured; his head was shaven, and his feet were sandaled. He did not see us, did not turn his head to right or left, and, his devotions ended, passed through the same door and shot back the bolt.

Now, I had not felt the least curiosity about this door, I had not even gone near it; but the rasping of the bolt aroused all my feminine fancies. I approached the door with an aroused interest. The sign, "No Strangers Admitted," was discouraging, but not deterring. Above the high wooden work were glass panes, and standing on tiptoe, I could just catch glimpses of a brimming fountain, graveled paths, grape arbors, flowering shrubs, beds of flowers, and cool verandas covered with red-tiled roofs.

"Marion," I cried, turning breathlessly to where she stood waiting my report, for she was far too short to reach the level of my gaze, "Marion, I do believe this is the garden no woman has ever entered."

Without another word we each drew a chair up to the door, stood up in them and gazed with longing eyes into the forbidden Eden. It was something, after all, to look at a garden where no woman had ever been.

In coming out of the church we met a young 66 lady sketching, who told us that if we rang a certain bell in the long wing, one of the monks would show us over the Mission; so nothing loth, we passed under the Spanish entrance-way, crossed the worn square tiles of the corridor, and pulled the handle of a long wire that hung beside an old sunken, arched, wooden doorway. Pretty soon in the distance I heard a broken jangle, and then the door opened and the monk that we had seen in the church stood before us. I told him our wishes, and answering that he would call the Brother, he disappeared.

The bell jangled again, and soon another monk came to the door.

"We would like to see what we can of the Mission," I explained, with my thoughts bent upon the wonders of that garden.

"Then you want to climb the belfry?"

I measured the climb, and hesitated.

“It gives you the finest view of Santa Barbara, and,” he added inconsequently, “it overlooks the garden,”

Marion and I both assented to the climb with instant alacrity, and forthwith he led the way up a sort of donjon keep to the open archways where hung the Spanish bells. Sitting down on the broad lintels, with bells to right of us, bells to left of us, and bells above us, we looked down into the 67 *padres'* paradise. Now we saw that it was an inclosed quadrangle, with sloping tiled roofs on all sides, forming cool verandas, with long grape arbors, and clinging vines, and huge trees of pink oleanders, and gay groups of flowers lining the graveled paths, and doves circling and dipping into the great, brimming fountain.

Oh! how I would like to go into that garden,” I said to Marion, forgetful of the monk, but he heard and came forward.

“Our order forbids a woman entering it.”

“Yes, I know,” I answered; and forthwith followed him over the roof of the church by means of solidly mortared steps into the second belfry tower. Here the bells were missing, but there was an uninterrupted view from the arched openings upon the mountains and the ruined Indian adobes, and from the archway facing the sea, the finest view of Santa Barbara. At our feet the little town lay wrapped in flowers and foliage, resting amid the encircling heights like a little bird in a nest. Beyond was the crescent shore, whose long, white arms clasped the beautiful bay, and beyond shore and bay shone an endless sea of sapphire, and still farther beyond, like ghostly dreams, rose the misty, magical islands. Nearly every one who comes to Santa Barbara climbs these belfry towers for the sake of the wondrous views. 68

When we were down again in the cool corridor the Brother, who happened to be a Frenchman, and who evinced consequently a great interest in New Orleans, sat down beside us on an old wooden settee, and told us somewhat of the Franciscans. The order has been in existence some five hundred years. The King of Spain first sent them forth to colonize her American possessions and convert the

Indians. It seems that they are not under the government of the Catholic bishop, but merely under the rule of their superior. They are self-supporting, and however much they may be in need, they deny themselves rather than ask help from the church. In the old days when all about the Mission the Indian had built his adobe dwellings and gave his labor there were orange and olive groves, and rare vineyards. A series of stone fountains played before the plaza, a stone aqueduct like those of old Roman days brought water from the neighboring canons, filling fountains and reservoirs. Now all this has disappeared. The one remaining fountain is battered and broken, the aqueduct is filled with dust and dirt, the reservoirs are all gone save one, the smallest, and from all the mighty vineyards, only one vine remains.

When we rose to go the Brother bade us wait a moment, and going into the house came forth bringing us an immense bouquet from the "Monk's 69 Garden." He gave them to us with many kind wishes, and we thanked him many, many times.

As we went slowly away from the Mission I turned for a last look. The sun was just setting in a solemn sea of golden glory behind the great rock-riven mountains. Over the wooden railing of the arched corridor the monk leaned, a solitary, somber figure. All at once the bells rang out, and pressing closer our precious trophy, I hurried on, and passing a corner soon lost sight of the Mission. And so ended one of the dream-days at Santa Barbara. 70

## VII.

### THE PLACE OF RAMONA'S MARRIAGE—A TRIP INTO MEXICO.

SAN DIEGO, Sept. 7, 1888.

It is an old saying that one should speak well of the ship that carries him safely, but we have given more than lip-service to the *City of Puebla*. We have practically proven our faith in that gallant vessel by climbing her broad sides a second time on our trip to San Diego. There were comparatively few passengers on board; the decks looked quite deserted, and I take it that the tide of travel flows, at this season, more to the northward. The steamer in her southerly course drew far

out at sea; no islands loomed in the distance; not a hint of land; only where the clouds trailed off in far away hazy undulations you could conjecture where the Coast Range rose. We ploughed our way apparently through the very heart of old ocean's solitude; so far away from shore and shelter that even the sea gulls refused to follow in our wake.

There was absolutely nothing but blue to be seen; from the sky to the sea and from the sea again to the sky, it was like one hollowed sphere <sup>71</sup> of sparkling sapphire. The soft air, the rhythmic splish-splash of the waters, together with the monotonous see-saw of the great engine, put in a plea for the most delicious indolence. Half-asleep and half-awake, Marion and I sat there by the guard rails too inert to talk or even to read the books spread out before us. It seemed as though I had lived and left a new delicious sort of existence, when the cannon boomed, signaling that we were nearing San Diego. As we rounded Point Loma, where the lighthouse lifts its white head, there lay the city by the sea, curled up in the arms of her beautiful bay, and smiling a very bland, though somewhat blank greeting, for it resembles Frisco in its long lines of yellow graveled streets, its many wooden houses, its utter innocence of flower and foliage. In a short time we were riding up Fifth street, the principal business thoroughfare, and had reached our rooms, which give us a glimpse of the blue bay beyond.

San Diego is only about half as large as Los Angeles; but it possesses all its progressive instincts. An electric railway runs past my windows; steam motors take you in any direction. The principal streets have electric lights and cement pavements, and there is an encouraging amount of building going on. But, of course, it is in the primitive stage now, and what has already <sup>72</sup> been done is only a promise of much more that it intends to do. Like Los Angeles, all conditions are favorable for a future great city. Between the two places, however, there is a rather ridiculous spirit of rivalry, though in no way are they to be compared, or should they be contestants for the same palm. Los Angeles is an inland city, with the great productive San Gabriel Valley in her wake, but with no harbor for export; San Diego has a bay equal to that which has made San Francisco what it is today; but then, San Diego has nothing to export. Her back country is limited and undeveloped, and real estate, however easily negotiable, is not transportable, save in itinerant accumulations. It seems strange that these two cities should rather choose to stultify each other's energies than to clasp hands

in the common weal of Southern California; but that this spirit of jealous rivalry is a fact beyond dispute can be proven by any one who has lived in either place. You cannot catch a stray bit of conversation that does not give you some individual's opinion on the relative merits of Los Angeles versus those of San Diego, and now that several hundred Knights Templar are to visit both places, the fun waxes fast and furious. The Los Angeles papers are full of righteous wrath because the real estate agents here have planned to distribute pamphlets in that city, <sup>73</sup> and the San Diegans are incensed at discovering here a counter-plot to set forth the charms of shaking shekels into the lap of Los Angeles. The coming visitors, meanwhile, all unknowing of the fire they have so fiercely fed. Now that the shortcut railroad has been finished between Los Angeles and San Diego, the former with its immense back country, the latter with its splendid bay, working together in mutual indivisible interest, would make the future growth and greatness of Southern California no longer a matter of speculation and argument, but an absolute demonstrable fact.

Old San Diego, or Oldtown, as it is more commonly termed, is about as sharp a contrast to New san Diego as could well be imagined. Marion and I had both noticed it—a little white hamlet dozing away in the sunshine—the day we steamed into San Diego bay, and we then and there resolved to explore it at our earliest opportunity. So, the very next day, we took seats in the steam motor at the foot of D street, and fifteen minutes transported us to the dullest, drowsiest, deadest place you could bring your mental faculties to grasp. It reminded me of Goldsmith's "deserted village," and for a long time we did not meet a living soul. Grass grew in the streets; adobe houses in various stages of dilapidation stood about without <sup>74</sup> reference to street or regularity; horses and cows browsed about, or headed us off on the dusty highway, causing us to retreat ignominiously. We were put off at what was once the center of the old Mexican plaza. All around us, forming, a great square, were the crumbling dwellings of the old Mexican residents. Little did they dream in those by-gone days, as they sat under the shadow of their adobes, watching their cattle grazing in the fertile valleys beyond, that the iron horse would one day sweep their race out and bring in an alien, energetic people and a new San Diego. Today Oldtown is as placid and serene as ever it was a hundred years ago. It remains a monument to the past, a finger pointing out the endless changes of time and tide,

and only now and then is its silence broken by the rushing of the trains, the depositing of some sight-seer or impertinent curiosity hunter.

For a moment after the train left us we stood blankly staring about, not knowing whether we stood in the city of the living or the dead. All around us were houses with paneless windows and doorless entrances; cattle walked through these abandoned homes or waylaid us at various points, as we waded through the dust of the sun-scorched lanes. It was a forlorn old place, full of ruins and reminiscences, and as we wandered about in utter solitude, hearing only the footfall of our own steps, 75 we came across the old priest's house where Ramona was married. You remember that she and Alessandro rode down to old San Diego and were married by Father Gaspara, and that he took down the old leathern-bound book and recorded the marriage with such singular misconception of Ramona's name that Felipe was put off the pursuit. Well, this was the house to which they rode—Ramona, tired and timid, Alessandro dogged and despairing, with thoughts of his ruined Temecula—and all over the walls of this old adobe are scrawled the names of Ramona and Alessandro.

The house was, probably, in its day, the finest in old San Diego. It inclosed an open court which bore traces of a former fountain, and ornamental shrubbery; there were still standing some fig-trees weighted with their purple fruit, and we were of one mind, that their flavor was most exceeding good. We wandered all about the rooms, most of them doorless and windowless, and filled with accumulations of rubbish, and we wondered, and we pondered, which was *the* room, but we were no wiser when we came out than when we went in. In a very few years this old building will have crumbled into shapelessness, for even now one of the wings is in a state of imminent collapse; the plaster has long since peeled off from the whole building, leaving only the mud brick substance, 76 and the red tiles are falling one by one from the roof. Soon only a moldering mass of dust and dirt will tell you where Ramona rode that dreadful night when she escaped from the Senora.

National City is the ambitious progeny of San Diego, though it boasts a separate individuality. It has all grown up in the past three years, side by side with San Diego, and it is evident that the two cities will be eventually welded into one. There is swift and frequent communication between the two places by means of a steam motor, and I will say right here that I have experienced nothing so



wild and reckless as a ride in this motor train. From the moment the motor leaves the foot of Fifth street it begins describing a series of Dutch rolls and free handed curves that make all my past and most thrilling experiences seem pale. You feel that your life has sunk to a minimum value, that, in fact, all life is as nothing compared with speed, and you tear along at a break-neck pace, curving to right, twisting and turning and doubling to left, without the slightest suggestion of slackening. On the contrary, I think the curves, instead of proving a cheek, tended to redouble the speed and the contortions that motor underwent, bouncing up into the air, lying over on one side, shivering and shaking and spinning, along, were simply diabolical. 77

When you get to National City, you look around and ask where the city is. You don't know whether the fine brick block in the center of a pasture is in National City, or has started a city by itself. The most ardent admirers of this crude metropolis admit that it is much scattered, but its recent rapid growth is or ought to be sufficient apology. It has finer waterworks than San Diego, quite putting this city to the blush, and the fruit that gained the first prize at the World's Exposition at New Orleans, came from Paradise Valley, just back of National.

One may take a great many trips about San Diego, each one as varied as it is sure to be interesting. Marion and I went off on the regular Saturday excursion last week. I believe these excursions have only been instituted a short time; but they have been well patronized. The whole trip, one of sixty miles by rail, stopping at various points of interest, making an all-day trip, is given for one dollar. Col. Dickenson, president of the San Diego Land and Town Company, looked after the general comfort of the crowd, and pointed out the particular points of interest to Kate Field, who formed one of the party. By the way, she has been engaged by the wine producers of California to write up the general harmlessness of California 78 wines, in order to confute and arrest the temperance movement here, which it is claimed will ruin the wine interests of this section.

Our motor went along at a little more rational pace than is its wont on its daily trips between San Diego and National, but still we flew along, leaving out the fancy flourishes, doubtless from the extra weight of the train.

Our first stopping place was the “Sweetwater dam,” the waterworks of National City, only completed last March. It is the highest dam in the United States, and the water spreads out from it like a great lake. We were told that the fifty feet of water which the dam holds had only been lowered a foot and a half the whole summer, and, indeed, we could easily discern the water line and measure with our eye the decrease. It is a great matter of congratulation that these waterworks have been completed, and that it can supply so generously with so little diminution.

At Oneonta we stopped for dinner. The hotel was about the only building worthy of mention. The place has not yet had a boom, and there was nothing to be seen about it but barren mountains and endless wastes, and only a few months ago this was all an unexplored desert. In a few years, I should say months, there is no telling what wonders will be wrought. So on the whole, while it is 79 at first rather hard not to criticise from precedent, one should remember that there has been no precedent for such activity and energy.

Oil City is composed of a few boards loosely flung over an iron drill, and a hole called by courtesy an oil well; though at a depth of six hundred feet no oil has been struck.

The last place at which our train drew up, that proved by far the most interesting, was Tia Juana, part of which lies in the United States and part in Mexico. As we all trooped across the border we were cautioned not to get tangled up in the lines; several of us stood up on the flat, square monument that marks the dividing line, and far away could be seen the tall white marble monument that marks more majestically the national limits.

As we bent our heads under the flag of Mexico, we found ourselves in an utterly strange and novel environment. Behind us were American frame buildings, the American himself, with all his prosaic, pushing attributes; before us spread the low, white, somnolent adobes, groups of cattle beneath awnings of verdant boughs, and the swarthy Mexican under broad sombrero, booted and spurred, riding like mad on his Mexican mu'stang, with lasso hurled after some recreant beast, or reclining with a *dolce far niente* air under an arbor of green branches,—a picturesque, posing figure, with 80 scarlet kerchief hiding the glitter of a dirk, while he indolently quaffed his beloved *pulque*.

The place was made up of a series of poor little straggling adobes, and the people were all evidently of the poorest class; but there were on every hand elements of the picturesque. From the poorest, most crumbling, least habitable home pretty dark-eyed Mexican girls in picturesque blues and reds, smiled out upon us, and everywhere were bowers of green, sometimes with a horse tethered beneath, sometimes with groups of dark-visaged senoras in gay gowns tucked up above their well-turned ankles, bending over their washtubs. I think it was one of the prettiest pictures I ever saw—a crowd of these handsome women, in their bright costumes, gossiping and laughing—at us, perhaps—as they leaned over their foaming suds, against the background of a summer sky. Surely an artist might find in such grouping a bit of color to delight his soul.

The custom house is a low, white, wide-spreading adobe, with a veranda running, the whole length of its front. The interior was dirty and dingy enough, giving one anything but a sense of official dignity. As you enter there is a series of three rooms, the central one forming the entrance to the open court, which in old Spanish homes is more lived in than any portion of the house. This custom-house was the largest building in Tia Juana and I suppose it must once have been quite a pretentious residence. The custom-house official presented us all with cards bearing the stamp or seal of Mexico, and while Kate Field was trying hopelessly to gain information from a loitering Mexican regarding the significance of the eagle and serpent, the rest of us pushed on to the little Catholic church just beyond.

I have seen a great many poor little churches, but I have never seen any church so pitifully poor as this Mexican one. In all adobe buildings the crude mud brick is covered with a thin coating of plaster; this church lacks even this bit of conventional finish, and the only thing that could make one imagine it a church is its pointed roof, and the rough wooden cross on its apex. Its doors and windows are the ordinary doors and windows that you see in any house; the windows have green blinds, and the two doors open directly on the ground. Inside there is no chancel rail, no aisle; the ceiling shows the rough rafters; there were three pews, two benches, some odds and ends of chairs. A strip of worn carpet is spread before the altar.

That the pleasures of Mexican Tia Juana are greater than its pieties is evinced by the pretty, prosperous-looking park close by, where until 82 quite recently, the bull-fights were held. It is, fact, the one spot in the place that boasts flowers and shrubs and outlay of effort.

Well, it might have been all a fancy on my part, but I am inclined to think that we all trooped over the borderline with a secret, new-born admiration for the pushing, prosaic, unpicturesque American.  
83

## VIII.

### THE MOURNFUL MEXICAN CIRCUS—ARKANSAS' RIVAL.

SAN DIEGO, Sept. 22, 1888.

In Los Angeles you are hemmed in by the mountains, in Santa Barbara you are a part of them, but in San Diego they form a dim, distant perspective, pushing as it were the blue bay into the foreground, and the Bay of San Diego forms one of the prettiest of pictures. Over its low, graceful sweep into the land there are always moving dazzling white sails and divers pleasure crafts; no black bulwarks darkening the water's edge, no curling columns of smoke sully the clearness of the sky; each color stands forth, sharp and clear, cutting itself into the eye like the shining sands and blinding blue of the Orient.

When one drives over the long, level stretches of scorched sage brush that lie between the bay and the distant mountains, with now and then the truncated cone of an extinct volcano, a sphinx and a date-palm are all that is lacking to make the scene Egyptian. You may journey for miles and miles and see no house, no verdure—only interminable, level, thirsty lengths, with a rainless, 84 relentless blue above, pierced by barren, ashen mountain peaks. It seems like anything but America, this strange, unfamiliar, sterile environment, with its written evidence of slumbering, perhaps smoldering, volcanoes. It is said that if you go far enough back you will find fertile valley and fruitful fields, but I have never yet been far enough to see them.

This “back country” of San Diego has become a serious and somewhat sensitive joke. It is not a safe subject to mention. When I first came here, and was, as they would say in Los Angeles, a “tenderfoot,” I unguardedly questioned the location and extent of this “back country,” but was immediately met by an avalanche of argument. I was smothered in posters and pamphlets, and when, at last, it was my fate to meet a real estate agent, I deemed it expedient to accommodate myself to their formula of faith, which sets forth literally the evidence of things not seen. But that there is a “back country,” and a back country that can produce prodigies, is made manifest by the fine display of fruits and vegetables to be seen in the Chamber of Commerce. Here are onions as large as a small head of cabbage, cabbages as large as huge pumpkins, and pumpkins and squashes that weigh one hundred and fifty pounds. Some of the largest fruits and vegetables are grown without a particle of irrigation. 85

It is rather singular that it should be reserved for San Diego to boast the largest and perhaps the finest hotel in the world, but such is the case. As the steamer rounds Point Loma and begins describing the crescent curve of San Diego Bay, from the end of the long, narrow peninsula, the red turrets and towers of the Hotel del Coronado stand forth. It is an immense hostelry, prominently poised, and no matter where you are in San Diego, if you look toward the bay you look also upon this huge hotel. It was not a matter of days ere we had explored its wonders. All about the exterior and entrance are beautiful grounds terraced down on one side to the ocean, from the other to the bay. The hotel, which can accommodate fifteen hundred guests and cost \$1,250,000, is built about a large, square, open court, filled with flowers and shrubs, fountains and trailing vines, pathways and beguiling benches. It was a spot to loiter in—to be loath to leave. The bright green foliage, the soft sward of grass, the rare roses, the trickling, fountain, the soft sea breeze, the awning of blue sky above—each and every one of these pointed out, at length, separate and cogent reasons why this particular hotel should have been built in this particular spot. The whole hotel is finished in hard wood. On the first floor are the offices, ladies' billiard-room, writing-room, an immense 86 dining-room, music-room and ball-room, and a series of reception-rooms. The finest of carpets, furniture, mirrors, bronzes, porcelaines and portieres form the appointments of these latter. Full of exquisite grace and harmony seemed the smallest and most secluded of these many parlors. Lifting

rich portieres you discover a room carpeted with something soft and light and velvety, into which your feet sink as in down; the furniture, placed about with careful carelessness, is of white and gold, upholstered in pale blue silk brocade; mirrors and graceful engravings, framed in white and gold, relieve the walls; lace curtains and pale blue hangings fall from the windows that open upon the sea; Dresden figures and a French clock stand upon the mantelpiece; bowls of roses on richly-wrought pedestals are to be seen in corners and alcoves. It is so dainty, so like a picture, so unlike a hotel, that I sat on the very edge of the blue brocaded chair and stared dumbly and doubtfully around me. Everything about the hotel is on the most lavish and luxurious scale. There is nothing lacking to the perfection of this place, save the will to leave it once you are there. Certainly there could be no more visible voluble proof of the ambitious aims of the San Diegans than this right royal hostelry.

87

We have made a tour around the bay on the pretty little steamer Roseville. We have gathered the daintiest of sea shells at Pacific Beach, and we have been several times to Tia Juana, the chosen site of the future American Monte Carlo. Once it was to see a Mexican circus, which proved to be rather a serious than a hilarious affair. In a corner of the tent, on a wooden bench, sat the four musicians, devoid of coats, with red silk handkerchiefs tied loosely about their swarthy throats; two pounded away on the dullest of drums, two scraped away on the squeakiest of violins, and all moved with a mechanical unanimity that would have lent luster to a quartette of automatons. There was not a glimmer, not the faintest flicker of consciousness, on their stolid features; they might have been celebrating the last sad funeral rites for aught that their visages revealed to the contrary. The four performers disported, if anything, a more melancholy mien than their musical confreres, and the most unhappy, miserable, misunderstood member of his class was the poor clown, who strove so hard to make his Spanish jokes tell with his American audience, that he had to retire behind the scenes three times to keep his countenance up to the required conventional luminosity. It was all far from inspiring, and when the grand finale proved to be an Apache war dance, and there was 88 shrieking and scalping and pistol shooting, and all rolled together in one agonizing saw-dusty holocaust, I began to appreciate the mood of those four phlegmatic followers of the Muse. I am of

the opinion that peanuts and pink lemonade, which were conspicuous by their absence, would have done wonders in creating a more appropriate and optimistic atmosphere.

Tia Juana Hot Springs, about three mile beyond Tia Juana village, are warranted to work miraculous cures for all those rheumatically afflicted. Persons who hobble painfully there are said to throw their crutches to the winds in less than a month and go dancing away—figuratively speaking. The provision for entertainment is very primitive—a rough shanty and a long row of rude, whitewashed bathrooms are all that the Springs boast at present. This is owing, in part, to the natural indolence of the Mexican race, and in part to the fact that the springs are located in a basin disadvantageous for permanent protection. Four year's ago a tolerably well-built hotel was carried away bodily by a water spout, and this has rather put a check upon any extensive building scheme; but now that the American is pushing his energy in this direction, it is believed that Arkansas will have a rival. 89

If the accommodations are unaccommodating the springs themselves are not. Each bathroom has a separate spring, ranging in temperature from 102° to 122°, so all you have to do is to select a spring which lies all uncovered at one end of the bathroom, and in a couple of minutes the long bath tub is filled. Between the warmth generated by the spring, and a bath at 104°—which number of degrees I chose, deeming it quite moderate—I was put in a position to appreciate most keenly and realistically the feelings of a boiled leg of mutton, though my face was more suggestive of a certain edible crustacean. These springs are strongly impregnated with sulphur, and are supposed to be kept at their high state of temperature by the fires of extinct volcanoes. Such, at least, is the popular tradition.

As we drove back through Tia Juna village, everything wore a fete day aspect. Yards of red, white and green bunting were being wound around the posts and pillars and cornices of the low white custom-house; row upon row of Chinese lanterns hung like a flaunting fringe from the edges of the long veranda; carts full of fresh green boughs stood about along the one straggling, lazy street; and groups of sombreroed men, between smoking and drinking, were weaving these branches into fresh awnings. We learned that all this was 90 the preparation for the 16th of September, the day

following, which is, to use, a paradox, their Fourth of July. It is the seventy-eighth celebration of the Mexican Republic; and cock fighting, bull fighting and horse racing were on the programme. A cavalcade of mounted Mexicans, riding suddenly upon us from out a thicket, made our horse nearly spring out of his harness, and a train of carts furiously driven, filled with dark-eyed women and children in gay holiday attire, caused one serious doubts whether the border line could be crossed in a matter of minutes. Every one looked very happy and very gay, and full of delightful expectation, and they were all openly proud of the prowess of the masculine equestrians.

San Diego has, perhaps, the finest climate in all California, with the sole exception of Santa Barbara. The weather seems always bright and clear; the sea breeze is always cool, rarely damp; it lacks the cutting winds of Frisco and the occasional fogs of Los Angeles. It has not only a climate that in three years has beguiled thirty thousand tourists into as many enthusiastic citizens; but it has the best harbor after that of San Francisco, ships of the largest dimensions entering without difficulty. Fruits and vegetables grown in San Diego and the vicinity have carried off the prize at every 91 exhibition, and I have found apples and quinces and pears, picked up without selection, to measure fifteen inches around. There are more olive groves than in any other part of California, and pure olive oil is one of the special products of the place, always finding a ready market and never able to meet the demand.

But there is one fatal lack in San Diego, and that is its water supply. Water rates are high and the quantity is limited. There are few gardens, hedges, trees, no park save the one small bit of green that is called the Plaza. It is a place devoid of beauty, of symmetry. The yellow graveled streets stare at you unflinchingly, yet the blue bay sparkles like a living thing in the sunshine, and the distant mountains wrap themselves in manifold mists and seek soft vanishing points in the ardent azure. It is a place crude, primitive, contradictory, barren in outlook, yet it calls up visions of tropical beauty. Perhaps it is for this reason that it has such a subtle fascination; for the effete Eastern people, with luxurious homes and many servants to do their bidding, come here and crowd into a three-room cottage, becoming themselves maids of all work, and are not only contented and happy, but under



the influences of these blue skies and balmy breezes swear an eternal fealty to this “wild and woolly west.” 92

Now that the great flume is near completion it is to be hoped that gardens will spring up, that trees will be planted, that something may be done to beautify and make lovely this spot, favored of the gods.

San Diego has many points of peculiar interest to the tourist. It was the primal point of civilization of the whole Western slope. Here the first mission was established in 1769; the first of that series of twenty-two scattered at intervals of time and space along the California coast, from San Diego to San Francisco. The mission has long been a crumbling ruin, given over to the destruction of the elements; its silver-toned bells have long since rung, out the changes from more modern churches, and all that is visually left of this first love's labor of Father Junipero are a few crumbling stones, fast dropping, one from another.

If any one wishes to understand the history and traditions of this Pacific slope he will make a tour of its many missions. It is a pilgrimage never to be forgotten or regretted, and yet it is infinitely sad. Every bit of broken mound and crumbling headstone seems to raise a cry of pitiful protest, every scroll of Indian handiwork opens the wound of a great wrong. It is said that in this country we have no ruins. We have not the dismantled castles of the Rhine, the historied temples of 93 Rome; but we have something which is far richer, far more rare—ruins which touch the heart, and are so pathetic in their primitiveness that the eyes fill with unshed tears and the voice grows dumb with wordless sympathy. And these old Franciscan fathers, who lived and labored and died—are they forgotten, lost in an eternal oblivion? Ah, no! It is they who live. The musical, saintly names with which they christened this garden spot of earth still softly echo their fervent “Aves”—still do the Spanish bells gather the children under the shadow of their wing, and even as a whispered benediction from loving lips falls this softest of southern sunshine.

With all the brain and energy and pushing progress of the American, it is still the hands of these old Franciscan fathers which, more than all others, have woven the fascinations of that fabric we call California. 94

## IX.

### THE MECCA OF LOS ANGELEAN AMBITION—THE EXPENSIVENESS OF CALIFORNIA LIFE OVERSTATED.

LOS ANGELES, Nov. 3, 1888.

It was the *City of Puebla* that was to bear back again to San Pedro. This time it was not a matter of choice, but rather of necessity, as we had bought excursion tickets, and the last day of their limit fell on the very day of the said steamer's sailing. We had hoped to return on the *Santa Rosa*; but a swift comparison of tickets with time-tables proved that there was no affinity between the two. So we became reconciled to what couldn't very well be avoided, and the *Santa Rosa*, with all her splendors, finally passed from our thoughts. But what we did not forget was the awful fact that the *City of Puebla*, that usually genial and accommodating transport, sailed at six a. m. However, we were not to be made a whit the less cheerful by this circumstance, so sending down our baggage the night before, I gave my watch an extra wind and wooed sleep at an early hour. Faithfully we rose and robed ourselves by my watch the next morning—leisurely we gathered up our various hand-traps and wended our way to the Pacific coast steamship office.

A dreadful quiet brooded over everything. About the doors of the steamship office a few deckhands yawned lazily. One of them eyed our baggage curiously. With a brisk, hurried air I pushed open the door and rushed up to the solitary official.

“Where will I find the baggage-room?” I asked, struck by the apparent dearth of passengers.

“Where are you going?” he asked mildly.

“On the *City of Puebla*” I returned excitedly.

“The *City of Puebla* sailed an hour ago.”

“Sailed!” I echoed, and dropping bags and bundles I sank into the nearest chair, in a completely collapsed condition. Life at that moment did not seem worth living, As for Marion, she pirouetted about in a state of dumb, dizzy despair.

At length I bethought me to look at my chatelain watch. The hands pointed to six. Then I looked at the office clock and saw that it was seven o'clock. The official followed my glance and smiled, not unkindly, rather with a gentle commiseration.

“The baggage!” I gasped, with a new-born agony.

“The baggage has gone on.”

“But it isn't checked, and this is the last day we can use our tickets, and what shall we do?” I cried, all in a breath. 96

“I will telegraph for your baggage and make your tickets good on the *Santa Rosa*, it will only be a matter of waiting a couple of days,” the official argued, with a reassuring smile.

And so it was, by one of those labyrinthine ways of Providence—or was it the extra winding of that watch?—that what we wanted came to us, and two days later the *Santa Rosa* brought us, flying colors into the harbor of San Pedro.

I wonder what that official thought of my timepiece?

We have been away from Los Angeles little more than a month, and yet the rapid improvements and changes have been Aladdin-like. The post-office has been moved much farther up town, while waiting the completion of its splendid building; fine blocks that we left in process of erection have found finishing touches, and, in many cases, occupants; old stores have been torn down; sidewalks

have swept away their obstructions, only to place them farther down the street, I have spent so much time zigzagging my way past mortar troughs and sand heaps that I shall experience a positive pleasure when the streets of Los Angeles will permit me to describe a straight, unbroken line.

With the October days, and the first excursion 97 from the East, there has crept into the business portion a more lively commercial spirit. The streets are filled with strange faces. There is a gay, delightful expectancy manifested by every one. The shop windows are bright and alluring with their new importations of fall goods; the discussions of key lots and long payments boast a more buoyant tone, and the real estate agent—oh! who can describe the real estate agent of Southern California! And what would California be without him? Notice him as he leans at his office door, with a flower in his button hole, while over his suave and seductive countenance ripple ravishing dreams of carloads of Eastern tourists wishing to buy lots.

It is wonderful how you can catch the character and instincts of a place by the stray bits of conversation caught on the wing. In San Diego, however far the flight of fancy might wander, you could always count on Los Angeles coming in as a point of comparison. Many a time I have been tempted to stop on the street to listen to these peripatetic expounders. One day I overheard one man say to another, with a laugh and a reverberant slap on the back, “Back country! I should say we had back country—haven't we Los Angeles?” Whatever bit of conversation you catch here, on Spring or Main street, is sure to bear the color and 98 complexion of corner lots or future payments. Ladies in social interchange artfully inveigle you into accepting, for a consideration, limited allotments of their landed estates, and it is the commonest thing in the world to see a lady sipping that extremely fascinating and feminine beverage, ice cream soda, with a bundle of deeds and mortgages reposing on her lap, like any ordinary brown paper package. I do not believe there is any woman in Southern California who does not own at least one lot of land. No matter how poor she may be, long payments bring the Mecca of her ambition close at hand.

But just here is a very serious point at issue, and one with which the courts are clogged. It is this: Whether a man or woman who has paid nine-tenths of the sum agreed upon and fails upon the last payment can have the whole thing taken away from him or her. It is maintained by the majority that

such payments should secure the right of a mortgage, and as the majority are more or less involved, it is an interesting question, the solving of which will lend a decided color to any future boom. I had heard, and it was my own unenlightened impression that California was expensive, that prices were exorbitant and the most ordinary articles hard to obtain. Laboring, under this erroneous idea, I sought to provide against all possible 99 contingencies, and if I had been going into the wilds of an African jungle, I could not have filled my trunks with more diverse and extensive supplies, only to find that everything could be bought as cheaply here, much cheaper, in fact, when one calculates the amount that must be paid on excess baggage. How delightful were those days when a woman could traipse all over the country with six Saratogas at her heels, instead of a paltry one hundred and fifty pounds, or an open pocket book. If woman's voice is ever heard, may she raise it against this cruel infringement of her real rights.

But, *revenons a nos moutons*. I believe Los Angeles to be, in the face of all calumny, the happy hunting ground of the bargain-seeker. There are several large dry goods stores here that have special sale-days, when by watching the papers you can discover your opportunity, and thereby purchase certain articles at, and sometimes below, cost price; and when it comes to fruits and vegetables, no country can equal this in either quantity, quality, or price paid. For five cents you can buy from your Chinaman enough of any one vegetable for a moderate-sized family; for the same sum you can get three or four musk-melons, or an abundance of whatever fruit happens to be in the season. Grapes are a cent and a half and two cents 100 a pound; but one need never buy grapes here, for there are miles upon miles of vineyards staked out in town lots, where fruit can be had for the picking. Thousands of pounds of figs, apricots and grapes have rotted upon their stems this summer, and even the papers have cried out for some man of enterprise to build more canneries to utilize this magnificent waste. The land-lunacy, however, overtops every other speculation. The sight of a sane and clear-sighted Easterner boasting the wondrous products of California, while naively discussing his "Cross & Blackwell," makes one pause at such an arrant lack of commercial logic.

The restaurants here are very reasonable in their prices. I know of no other place where you can get so much for so small a sum. Twenty-five cents will give you a dinner of soup, several kinds of meat, all vegetables in the market, pie, pudding, ice-cream, coffee and always fruit. These dinners

are even cheaper when tickets are bought. It is a miracle to me how so much can be given, good service included. It is well-known that Chinamen are the cheapest laundrymen. This fact is so well set forth and supported that the white washer-woman is completely driven out of the field, or, rather, washtub. On the other hand, it is true that white labor, and particularly woman's labor, is exceptionally valued. A first-class female cook 101 demands from twenty-five to thirty-five dollars per month, and gets it easily. Coal and wood are high, but this is a matter of utter indifference to a people who burn oil almost entirely, both for cooking and heating purposes. House rents are higher than you will find in the average city, but this is owing to the late limited supply. The number of new houses now going up all over the city will speedily obviate this excessive valuation.

So, take it all in all, I am given to ask wherein lies the expensiveness of California? If you pay more for your house, you pay less for your food. If you pay more to her Majesty, the cook, you pay less to his Celestial Highness, the monarch of the washtub. After a little mental calculation, you will find that the scales balance in favor of California; for when all is added and subtracted, there remains over and above the arguments of filthy lucre a delicious climate, a novel environment, a delightfully easy-going manner of existence. The whole system of living in California seems like one never-ending picnic. The houses are like dollhouses, compact and cozy, and the oil stoves furnish refreshments in a twinkling. No one takes house-keeping seriously; no one holds a home permanently; the commercial spirit, if not burning brightly, is fain to flicker, at least, and a couple of odd hundreds will uproot time's ties without a pang. 102

The other day we took a trip to the San Pedro winery. The day was like one of those rare days of Indian summer, with a dreamy haze that seemed somehow to temper hard facts and summon back lost illusions. The bright blue of the sky was softened with a faint film; the air was like the touch of soft fingers; the great mountains, wrapped in their weird, misty mantles, seemed filled with a sad, strange gentleness; the sounds of life fell on our car with a muffled, unfamiliar resonance. As we made our way through quiet walnut groves our feet rustled over the dull brown leaves beneath; above our head a bird was singing in wild ecstasy; all about us teemed with a peculiar, personal pathos. It was like surprising some sweet, undreamed secret; like a long, deep look into the unguarded heart of a friend. Here and there we picked up a walnut —some one gave us flowers—

we passed great stretches of dismantled vineyards—and at length our loitering steps brought us to the San Pedro vineyards and the San Pedro winery.

We were first plied with all the grapes that we could eat—great brown, luscious bunches; then we watched the manufacture of wine. On the outside of one of the buildings, in a great open bin, the cartloads of grapes are first dumped. A man who is stationed there rakes the grapes into what looks very much like a cane-carrier. This 103 cane-carrier, or rather grape-carrier, takes the grapes up into the second story of the building, where, passing under a great wheel, the fruit is crushed; and from one side throws out the stems, and from the other trickles off in a little sluggish stream, through a wooden conductor, into the adjoining building. This is the wine cellar; here are huge tanks filled with wine. Step-ladders lie against their great grim sides, and when the fair-faced, good-natured Teuton in charge, whose countenance was splashed with the gore of the grape, invited me to investigate the contents of those huge wine vats, I did so. I looked into the one where the tiny stream was running ever so slowly; then I looked into another where liquid and fruit were together and bubbling as hard as though all the witches of “Macbeth” were urging it on. It was not boiling however; the man told me—eye evidence to the contrary—it was merely fermenting. It takes from two to three years to make wine, requiring a great deal of attention and care, and every now and then it is drawn off from one tank to another by means of a long hose.

The white or Muskat grape makes first, from the sluggish little stream, Angelica and Muscatel; the fruit and drippings of juice going to make an inferior wine. The ordinary red grape makes from the first juice port; from the fruit and drippings 104 the common red wines, such as claret. One corner of the first building was set aside for distilling brandy.

Brandy, port, sherry, Tokay, Angelica, Muscatel and claret were ranged side by side in the sample room. The taste of new wine, just as it is crushed from the grape, is simply atrocious. This winery manufactures fifteen thousand gallons of wine annually, which the owner, a German, acknowledged to be a moderate manufacture. Tokay wine, made from the flaming Tokay grape, is the rarest and richest of all the wines. Beautiful as amber, it is a nectar fit for the gods.

Our six months' trip together has come to an end. We have realized all our dreams; we have received rare returns, and courtesy and kindness have met us on every hand. The fascination of California has laid strong fingers upon us, and will scarcely loose its hold; but our sight-seeing for a time is over, and life must slip back into somewhat of the conventional groove.

And now I clasp your hand lothfully, lingeringly, and in the words of that old Mexican woman at Santa Barbara, I give you "*Adios, adios, adios!*"